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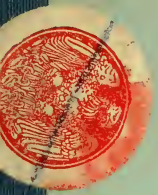

WAYSIDE LYRICS

GEORGE W. BRADFORD

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WAYSIDE LYRICS

Wayside Lyrics

By

George W. Bradford

1921

The Stratford Company, Publishers

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To The Memory Of
Theresa Irene Houk

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My Poems

MY poems are the children of my soul,
Born from my heart
And fashioned by my mind
And pictured for you in this folded scroll.

My Mother

MY Mother has the sweetest face
Of all the persons that I know —
Not like the Mona Lisa there,
But lovelier far than art can show.

Her heart is good, for she has toiled
Through all these years and sacrificed
For husband blind, my father good,
And for us children — and all for Christ.

To Waldo Hilary Dunn

TO you, my friend,
I owe more than I know;
For you have given
Me vision, and the glow
Of spiritual flame
That comes from noble life
Where white truth dwells
Unshaken by our strife.

The Traveller

A dying day
  And a cry in the heart for home —
Sunlight a-glimmer
  O'er the land where I would roam.

Nearer to Heaven
  And Eternity's moonlit fields
I seem to be,
  As the sunlight to darkness yields.

A Child's Death

THE child was dying —
  His face was lit with a smile:
We were crying —
  He implored us to stop for a while.

His face shone lovely
  From the light of the heavenly gate:
We tried to smile,
  But alas, it was too late.

Happy Pair

'TWAS in a mountain dell I found her —
  Pretty maid;
She lay among the violets,
  In the shade;
I kissed her till she wakened,
  Quite dismayed;
And, alas, I found her angered —
  Lovely maid!

Yet I smiled and gazed adoring
  At her there:
She had blue eyes, blue like azure,
  And her hair
Was bright and gold like sunbeams
  In the air:
And we walked into the hamlet —
  Happy pair!

My Love and I

WE walked adown the winding road,
My love and I;
We came upon a rustic bench
And passed it by.

We longed to walk and talk of love
Through all the night,
Until the dawn should fade the stars
With morning light.

The Question

IT may not be
  That I was meant for you;
It may not prove
  That you were meant for me;
Yet how can we
  Decide it now, forsooth?
Must we not try
  That we may know the truth?

To a Maiden

PRAY excuse me, gentle maiden,
If I call thee but a child;
'Twas last night that I first met thee
And perhaps you may have smiled
At my rather rude composure;
Yet believe me, for I mean it,
That I ne'er have met before
Just the same glad child of sunshine,
Filled so full of sunny lore.

My Love

I MET her where the orchids bloom
In a shadowed dell;
I held her little hand in mine;
I loved her well.

A gentle pressure told my love —
With nothing said;
She sighed and turned her blushing cheek
And lips of red.

Love

THE Primrose sighed and gently turned her
head
As Zephyr sweet came stealing through the
wood;
She sighed again, he caught her where she
stood
And warmly kissed her brow, a-blushing red.

Two Spartan Boys

TWO Spartan boys
  Fought bravely on the plain;
One of them fell,
  And he smiled through all the pain.

When the war was done
  The two came home again:
One on his shield,
  And both, victorious men.

At the Shore

I WAS pacing the shore alone one day
By the lashing, angry sea,
When a wave broke with a mighty shock
And flung my child to me.

His lips had still the happy smile
That he had smiled to me —
My heart broke, and I buried him
Close by the sea.

The Poet

A poet's breath
Is perfumed sweetly like the rose,
And like its flower, oft fading goes
In early death.

To Henry Van Eman Brown

TO you, my friend,
I write these few, short lines,
In token that
In you I find there shines
A warmth of friendship,
I covet more than signs
Of outward acts,
Which malice oft with bitterness combines.

To H. H.

HE is gone, my friend is dead;
In his grave he lies alone
On the hillside where the dripping rain
Weeps down, and sad winds moan.
In his charnel house of clay
His pale, cold form lies low —
A youth of beauty, struck too soon
By death's fell blow.

To Our Lord

OUR Lord with thorn-crowned brow
Humbly bore the sin,
That we His children might somehow
In penitence come in.

Forethought

A LITTLE thought of Thee, dear Lord,
Each day we live;
A consciousness of that great love
Which Thou dost give;
A little care against a sin
Will help us when we near the gate
Of death, to enter in.

Wild Lily of France

WILD LILY of France,
In the meadow we found thee,
Hebe's fair goblet of lavender hue;
Fresh, slender floweret,
Unguarded yet faithful,
Cheering the torn hearts
Of those marching over;
Wantonly crushed
By the feet trampling on thee —
Lavender Lily, sweet Lily of France.

From the Peyrou

IT was the dying of the day,
And in a splendid burst of golden glory,
The tired sun
Flooded the low Cevennes, castled and hoary.

Far to the north of the town,
Old Pic St. Loup as a silent warder grim
Loomed in the twilight,
Guarding the hill towns, nestling close to him.

On the March

AS a phantom army through the gloom
Of a moonless night, we marched ahead,
And heard the low, incessant boom
Of cannons belching forth their lurid red.

Our voices hushed, our only sound
Was the steady tramp of marching feet
In rhythm over the frosted ground
Of a highroad or a darkened village street.

Though unafraid, we did not speak:
Because it seemed that death was nigh,
Stalking by our line to seek
Which ones of us were ready soon to die.

On Board a Troop Ship

THE troubled ocean heaves in sighing swells;
Its waters dark rise grim across the deep;
The wind, its ancient foe, beats ever on
Its rugged visage, wrinkled and careworn.
The tale of sorrow which its murmuring tells
Is long and sad, and never wont to end.

Heroes

IN Flanders' land
Where poppies tinge with red,
A thousand hearts
In loyal service bled.

There they lie;
But their souls have fled the earth
To walk with God,
Having suffered a glorious birth.

Waiting

DARKNESS fell
As Night stalked through the woods;
In our dugouts damp
We found what cheer we could.

The news of peace
Was mocked by a cannon's roar;
We waited on
As we had done before.

By the Loire

'TWAS down the valley of the Loire we came
On a sunlit afternoon,
Through the dark green vales and the shadowed
hills
Flowered by June.

Provence

HEATHER hills and gently rolling plains
Of old Provence, the land of Roman walls —
Dusty roadways, trod by Spanish swains,
And heavily wheeled by lumbering carryalls!

By the Mediterranean

DUSK of twilight settles o'er the land;
Behind the far west hills the sun sinks low
And stains with rose the rifted, golden strand;
The south winds from the sea their sighings blow.

At Nice

THE mountains rose like monarchs from the sea
Of azure blue. The sea stretched far
To the ocean of molten gold where spirits free
Mingled their glory with the gold of the western star.

A Song from the Chinese

I DRINK red wine from the wine stained cup
In the shadows of lilies fair —
The moon, my image, and I alone
In our starlit vale, Nowhere.

I offer my cup to the low, round moon,
But she turns away her head;
And my image mocks, as I taste again
Of my love-cup brimming red.

My image recoils when I dance and sing
As the moon sails the deep night sea;
We are merry until I swoon away —
My companions then leave me.

But soon I forget these friend of mine,
For only in spring we love;
And then I shall be at the high cloud home
In that blue sea far above.

Repining Love

FROM THE CHINESE

THE blind of pearl is gently lifted
By a lady fair,
She sits alone, profoundly sad,
Her arched brow lined with care.

The wet tears slowly trace their way
Cold on her cheek;
Whom does she hate, this lady fair? . . .
She will not speak.

A Spring Morning

FROM THE CHINESE

I WAS roused from the darkness of sleep
By the song of a morning choir
Of birds that sang as the fair dawn broke,
And my soul was set on fire.

While I slept, the patter of gentle rain
And the sighs of the whispering wind
Lulled me into the land of dreams
Where my beloved one spinned.

All about my bed with old leaves strewn
Where the young grass kissed the sun,
The petals of cherries had fallen low,
Their life's thread nearly spun.

The Approach of Winter

I HEAR the sighs of winter
  As the winds blow through the oaks —
Can it be that lingering autumn
  Must now leave her woodland folks?

All about our campus coverts,
  Wildly leaf-strewn everywhere,
Autumn colors all have vanished
  Into grey — and trees are bare.

In the Woodland

WHEN the cowslips yellow the river marge
And the lilies dapple the way,
When the catbird whines and the redcoats fly
And the streamlet murmurs at play,
I want to wander through bush and fen
In the haunts of the wild wood things;
Find beetles and bugs and flowers and birds
And hear when the woodthrush sings.
I would break through the thicket of thorny briers
To find a wild woodbine;
I would climb a tree to the topmost boughs,
I would hunt for the eglantine.
In earliest spring ere the snows are gone
I would hunt arbutus rare;
I would live and love in my woodland wild —
I would build my cabin there.

The Seasons

WHILE yet the snows of winter may be traced
Along the north bank of the creek and mound,
Spring steps forth, her filmy garments flaunting
And prints arbutus on the leaf-strewn ground.

She lightly touches with her roseate wand
The blackened branches of the forest trees
Till they begin to green with growing buds
And blossoms filled with nectar sipped by bees.

It is not long till Summer's tannéd form
Is seen to pace the meadow, wood, and vale;
In shadowed nook she paints the lovelier flowers —
The scarlet rose and the summer lily pale.

With golden wand she changes wheat to gold —
Its heavy heads droop burdened in the heat;
At night she sleeps with tired eyelids closed
While zephyrs guard her in her still retreat.

Then Autumn, somber child with crimson face,
Takes up her reign as Summer leaves her field;
She touches every fruit with garnet wand
And swells them luscious for a bounteous yield.

The vintage press is then restained anew
With crimson wine from grapes grown on the hill;
The apples blush, the graceful pears grow tan;
The wheat is threshed and taken to the mill.

And now the winds of winter wing their way,
Whirling the snowflakes from the frozen lands;
And Winter's child in robes of sparkling white
Locks up the streams with flashing, diamond bands.

For long months all the earth is wrapped in quiet —
The only birds, the snow-birds of the cold,
Wide plains of white, that glare in the winter noon
And glimmer rose from the sun, as the day grows old.

Night and Dawn

THE night is dark
And the Lady Moon has gone to rest
Through the twilight portals of the west
In her silver bark.

She leaves the stars
To guard the night deeps till the dawn
Touches with rose the close-cropped lawn
And the meadow bars.

A Sunset

A SUNSET of rose, the gateway
Into night, banked by the pearly grey
Of the twilight's darkening mist;
Mantled hills of snow, and woods —
Soft, dark woods below the tinted sky;
Fair Evening, thou hast painted well.

Rain

RAIN-drops
Fall on the lawn
All through the night
Until the day dawn.

Thirsting buds
Drink while they may;
The dews that are left
Sparklingly play.

At Evening

INTO a clear and sapphire sea
The blood-red sun sinks low —
Behind, the clouds are floating free
In a wondrous rose-red glow.

The light fades into azure grey,
And the restless evening star
Begins again her night-time sway
In her silver car.

Where We Walked

THE valley where we walked lies veiled with haze,
And autumn tints are crushed from spicy fruits;
A forest goddess flings from chaliced vase
The odors of the corn and dying shoots.

Through endless days the sylvan fairies play,
And Pan with all his troop in riot free
Pours forth a song of happiness all day
To be in tuneful, tearless melody.

A Forest Fancy

O, THE darkened copses of the forest green,
Enchanted by a shadow fantasy,
There lingers in thy fretted, vernal sheen
A symphony of rarest harmony.

I come to hear sweet tales of long ago
Told by the oak in soft, prophetic strain,
To listen to the brook, a-babbling low
With childlike grace its gurgling soft refrain.

Summer Joys

THE joy of living eddies amongst the trees;
Why should we gloom and waste ourselves
away?
It is better to observe the laden bees
The livelong day;
Or sit and watch the lowing herds that graze
Upon the uplands where the grass is green;
Or read the thoughts of seers and poet lays,
And rest unseen.

To a Bird

SWEET bird that singest in the wilderness
The rare flute melodies of the forest wild,
Sing to me, wild thing, that I may leave this earth
And with thee bide as Nature's happy child.

Thy ruby throat will pour thee all away
Into a song of pure, unselfish art,
With free and joyous nature as thy theme,
With pure and chastened pleasure in thy heart.

To an Ivy Leaf

THOU waxen leaf of ivy brown,
Frost-bitten by the autumn air —
We sorrow, for thou wert as fair
As any leaf upon the down.

The freshness of thy summer dress
Thou hast put by for sober tints;
Of winter now thy grey wall hints;
Our hearts for thee are in distress.

Fantasy

AMONG the shadows of the forest lanes,
Where fairies dance in evening's dewy times,
I linger where fair gods in rock-built fanes
May teach me golden measures and soft rhymes.
There I may hear those sweet, undying strains
That soft winds play on mellow forest chimes.

The Vain Rose

IN a garden where grew
Sweet roses of youth,
One rose grew the fairest;
Her petals were rarest
Of deep, blushing hue;
Her stalk was most slender
And graceful in splendor;
She deigned not to glance
On her sisters more humble,
But reared her proud tresses
To be gazed at in wonder.
She loved her rich beauty
And nodded most queenly;
Yet the shears of the gardener
Put an end to her scorn;
She lived for awhile,
Wore a radiant smile
In the vase by the window;
But O, how tormenting!
Her beauty fast faded;
Ere long she was old

And in shame she repented;
She gazed with much sadness
On the garden's fresh glory.

Lily-of-the-Valley

LOVELY Lily-of-the-Valley
Scenting my room —
Thy delicate flower-bells glow
While Evening's gloom
Falls quietly about my cushioned chair,
Veiling the paintings on the shadowed wall,
Copies of Titian and da Vinci rare.

An Impression

THE waves beat on and out upon the brine;
A tiny sail scarce moving on the deep,
A speck of white out on the foaming sea
That swells in endless billows to the winds.

On Perilous Seas

PALE clouds are blown across the azure sky
In fragments wildly scattered o'er the deep;
The stars are frightened, and the mother moon
Is troubled, yet can only watch and sigh.
When Aeolus in a fit of stormy wrath
Unlooses all his blasts of rugged winds,
They dash and leap and chase each other far
Until the stars are frightened from their sleep.

Theresa

BLUE-eyed flower in my garden,
Loveliest flower a knight could seek,
I had left thee in our morning
With the dew upon thy cheek.

Mine the part to leave thee waiting
While I tried my battling might —
Leave thee waiting in my garden
While I helped my comrades fight.

Every morning with the zephyrs
Came sweet messages from thee,
Breaths of freshness as of spring time,
Gently blown from thee to me.

Then one day the breezes hushened,
Seemed a-wearied as with pain,
And I thought it was the battle,
Or the sorrow for the slain.

But another breeze came sighing,
Telling me that you had died;
And I climbed into my dugout
Where I laid me down and cried.

Sunset Lands

THERE is a land beyond those western hills
Whereon the rose of sunset lies,
Where violet lanes and panting, laughing rills
Thread sylvan ways, beneath calm, azure skies.

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